



DEP FACT SHEET

Overboard Discharge System Abandonment Procedures

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Contact: (207) 287-3901

What is an overboard discharge?

An *overboard discharge (OBD)* is the discharge of treated sanitary domestic wastewater from residential, commercial, and publicly owned facilities, which are not conveyed to municipal or quasi municipal sewage treatment facilities, but instead to Maine's streams, rivers, and the ocean. Because the effluent from *overboard discharge systems* serving these facilities pollute our water resources and close shellfish harvesting areas, State and Federal clean water laws have mandated their removal and replacement wherever possible. Chapter 596(I) 06-096 of the Code of Maine Regulations contains specific requirements for the proper abandonment of these systems.

How do I abandon an overboard discharge system?

When an overboard discharge system has been replaced, discontinued, or has not been relicensed by the Department, all of the unused components must be removed or sealed within 90 days according to the following procedures:

- ☐ Residual untreated or primary treated wastewater can not be discharged directly or indirectly to the water from any tanks. This restriction includes but is not limited to septic tanks and grease traps. The wastewater in the system must be disposed of in accordance with the license or by a local licensed septic pumping service.
- ☐ Mechanical treatment systems must be aerated (run) until within 24 hours of being emptied. The liquid portion may be discharged to the disinfection unit after the contents have settled. Wastewater containing solids may not be discharged to the water, but must also be removed by a local licensed septic pumping service.
- ☐ Sand filters of less than 1,000 gallons per day (gpd) capacity must be disconnected from the septic tank, have the disinfection (chlorinator) tank removed and the resultant hole filled with clean crushed gravel to serve as a dry well.
- ☐ Sand filters with a capacity of more than 1,000 gpd must be disconnected from the septic tank, have the downgradient plastic or clay liner excavated and/or punctured sufficiently to allow rainwater to drain, and either remove the disinfection tank or have it crushed, filled and buried.
- ☐ The liquid contents of the disinfection tank must be emptied to the water through the outfall no sooner than 30 minutes after last receiving wastewater. Remaining solids may not be discharged to the water but must be removed and disposed of properly.
- ☐ When appropriately emptied, all tanks (including but not limited to septic tanks, mechanical treatment tanks, grease traps, pump stations, and disinfection tanks) must be disconnected, filled with soil or removed, unless the components are incorporated into the replacement wastewater disposal system.
- ☐ The exposed portions of the outfall pipe must be removed. Buried portions must be removed or permanently sealed.
- ☐ You must notify us within five business days after your OBD system has been abandoned (contact info below). If your removal was not accomplished through our OBD Removal Grant Program, have your contractor certify to the proper abandonment.

For more information:

If you have questions about:	Contact	Telephone	Email
License transfers/renewals, selling a property with an OBD, general program questions	Mike Demarest	(207) 287-3901	michael.demarest@Maine.gov
OBD inspections	Chris Johnson	(207) 287-7684	christopher.p.johnson@Maine.gov
OBD removal grant program	Richard Green	(207) 287-7765	richard.a.green@Maine.gov

If you prefer to write, all of the staff above can be reached at:

**Maine Department of Environmental Protection
State House Station 17
Augusta, ME 04333-0017**

Visit the DEP website at www.MaineDEP.com Keyword = **OBD**